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nothing can ever take away its calmness of judgment, its elevation of tone, or its beauty of style.

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8. — *Fears for Democracy regarded from the American Point of View.*

By CHARLES INGERSOLL. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co. 1875.

THE author says in his Preface that "these pages have been much curtailed from what were prepared for the press." This shows good sense, good taste, and good judgment. He could have done but one better thing; he might have suppressed them all.

To review a book of this kind properly some attempt should be made to state the theory on which it is based, and then explain the arguments used to support it; but when there does not appear to be a theory, and the argument reduces itself pretty much to general abuse, the reviewer is rather at sea. The only impression left on the mind, after reading the "*Fears for Democracy*," is a vague notion that the author thinks the American people would do better if they attended more to politics, and that centralization endangers the Republic. This is good so far as it goes, but three hundred pages of solid print seem rather a large allowance for the statement of truths which have begun to grow a little stale after forty years of constant repetition. As for the argument, it would be hard to find any one beside Washington of whom good is said, except that, oddly enough, a strange kind of affection is shown for both of those most irreconcilable of characters, — Hamilton and Jefferson.

Under such adverse circumstances but one course remains, and that is to give the reader some idea of the author and then let him speak for himself. Mr. Ingersoll appears to be a person of considerable desultory reading, and of slender discrimination. He is beset with a passion for quotation; he quotes recklessly, without seeming to care much from whom, so long as he quotes. Some sections are an absolute mash of different authors. His politics probably were originally Whiggish, after the Webster-Clay type; in course of time he drifted into Democracy, and became copperhead during the war: just now he has a very Bourbon smack. The first hundred pages are harmless, and are taken up with telling us in different ways that the Federalists wanted strong government and the Republicans did not; that finally the Republicans elected Mr. Jefferson, and that then America grew more democratic. All which we have heard at least once before. As he comes to the war, however, Mr. Ingersoll snuffs the battle from

far, and begins to snort and lash his tail. When excited he is to be feared. Nouns and verbs had best take shelter at such times, for when thoroughly roused he is capable of treating them like this: "When we look back to acknowledge it was, in the race for executive patronage and on pretences disavowed, when the danger arose, by all but those who never flinched, that small men and small ambitions brought a people so flourishing and happy as we were to seeming ruin." In speaking of the slavery agitation he remarks: "The debate began the 11th of January, 1836. Mr. Buchanan presented to the Senate, and gave rise to it, the Memorial of the Caen Quarterly Meeting," etc. And such sentences occur on every page! The merciful man is merciful to his beast, but Mr. Ingersoll has no mercy on his mother-tongue.

Mr. Ingersoll traces most of the nation's ills to the combined wickedness of the Abolitionists and the office-seekers; on the whole he hates the Abolitionists a thought the most, but they are pretty tough customers, and have stood so much pounding in old days, that at this late date there seems little chance of doing much in that direction. The office-holders, however, are a different question, and all decent folks are agreed that something ought to be done to keep them in order. Mr. Ingersoll does not propose any reform, but he states a fact which, if true, is calculated to cause real uneasiness; he says, "The office-seekers were not ashamed to measure their conduct . . . to what they deemed the smallest hazard to their places." This is very bad, and one is inclined to think all the worse of them from the mysteriousness of the offence. They have long been known to be a corrupt and greedy class of people, but when they commit the sin of "measuring to," the honest citizen feels his gorge fast rising.

For a long time before the war the South had perhaps more to complain of than we, at the North, are now willing to allow; but certainly the Southerners themselves had no idea of how very badly they were treated, for the "war ended a long persecution, in malignity not exceeded by any religious persecution, and this persecution was unrelentingly pursued" in a deep feeling of wickedness and hate. If this be true of the conduct of the North before the war, it would puzzle Mr. Ingersoll, even with his incomparable power of involution, to express, by massing together the combined invectives of all the languages in the world, the atrocity of its conduct since. This is really too bad, as the South has suffered enough of late years not to have its case made ridiculous before Northerners and before the world. During all the long period before the war there was little in the free States in the way of ability, for "since the death of Mr. Hamilton,

the North had not produced one acknowledged leader: they all came from slave-holding States." This statement is open to some doubt, to judge from the language used by slaveholders at the time.

Even at the risk of being dull, and with a pervading sense of the gravity of the crime, room must be made for this sketch of the Presidential conventions in 1860. And though no convention pretends to be a very noble assembly, those held in that year seem to have been below the average. The people then sent "hungry delegates to miserable conventions, to inaugurate a revolution, with every thinking man in the whole country against it." No wonder, as Mr. Ingersoll observes, "the veterans of a revolution crowned with success and honor, and led by heroes, . . . would have trembled" could they have been told of such a destiny. So far it is all plain sailing, but exactly what Mr. Jefferson's Louisiana purchase has to do with these "hungry delegates" and "trembling heroes" is not so clear. That there must be some connection between them is certain, for they are all mixed up together in one paragraph. At the same time we are asked, "where would be our destiny if the English had become our neighbors along the whole line of our western frontier?" This is a hard question, but if one dared to hazard a guess, it might be suggested that the abode which suits it now with the British all along our northern frontier might suit it indifferently well under the proposed change.

Men under the influence of political passion are apt to disparage their opponents; very few of us however are so jaundiced as not to be able to find any one whom we can respect. A Southerner probably would think lightly enough of the abilities of Lincoln and Seward, of Sumner, of Andrew, and of Chase; a Free-Soiler might despise Davis, Douglas, or Breckenridge, while both might sneer at Everett and the Whigs, but there are not many who could honestly say, "we know . . . that in the Revolution of 1776, a country of some three millions of people produced illustrious men; and in that of 1860, the same country, ten times as populous, did not produce one. No merit appeared that was not military." Whether or not Mr. Lincoln was a great man is hardly worth disputing. He is dead, and another generation will be the final judge of his statesmanship and of his wisdom. He would be the last man to claim a higher place than he deserved, and Americans might well be content to let his ashes rest in peace; neither our praise nor blame can hurt him. Literature and eloquence nevertheless are judged by fixed rules, and to say of the man who dedicated the Gettysburg Cemetery "that he was of the order of men who fill places in their native village" reflects but little credit on the intelligence of the writer.

But it was not the South alone which was oppressed, the whole American people experienced (and for anything that we know still experience) wrongs of an intolerable kind. They cry aloud and no one hears them; they are despised, insulted, — no one but Mr. Ingersoll knows how deeply. "The people had no influence." "The cry had been of the North" (whatever that may mean), "the vain cry of the unnoticed people, for years, that the South would be driven to revolution." "The people had come to be nothing but a despised crowd." After all this, who can doubt but that it is the solemn duty of Mr. Ingersoll to put the red cap of liberty upon his head, throw out his broad banner to the wind, and lead us to liberty or death?

No one can deny that in the short history of this country there is much to regret, and more which it would be pleasant to forget; but the average American has been apt to think that, whatever else has gone wrong, our foreign relations have usually been pretty well administered. Especially in regard to England, with the exception of some twelve years at the beginning of the century, an ordinary citizen might have been excused a feeling of pride at our diplomatic record. Yet Mr. Ingersoll says: "We have made numerous treaties in adjustment of controversies with Great Britain, and for the most part have had reason on our side, and the best of the argument, as the weaker party commonly has, but every case went against us until 1871, when the Alabama case, the most doubtful we ever debated, was determined in our favor." Lord Palmerston said in the House of Commons in the debate on the Ashburton Treaty: "There is nobody, I believe, who thinks it a good treaty, nobody who does not think it a bad and very disadvantageous bargain for England." Here is one case out of a good many where the opinion of some Englishmen, at least, seems to conflict with that of our author. Yet on second thoughts the opinion of Englishmen cannot be worth much, for they are shown to be a very bad and disreputable people indeed. "It was a point not disputed in the British debates on the reforms of 1831-32, *debates which might stand in honorable memory of that country were its other records blotted out*, that institutions are not to be made." Even to one not in the least an Anglo-maniac, this sounds rather severe. Think of it, the only honorable deed in eight hundred long years is the debate on the Reform Bill of 1832! Besides, would not the history read somewhat oddly if absolutely confined to those volumes of Hansard? At first blush the story of the British empire might appear to lack connection were these speeches, fine as they are, taken quite alone. But no doubt this is an error of ignorance. Now why could not Mr. Ingersoll be pre-

vailed on to put his hand to the task, and, in his own clear, nervous sentences, dash us off a compendious little history of Great Britain compiled on this principle? Such a work could not fail to supplant those of all other writers from Bede to Macaulay. There is danger though of going too fast even in a matter so simple as this, and on Mr. Ingersoll's own showing his field must be enlarged. Men swayed by the passions of civil war never judge calmly, and the conduct of her Majesty's government during the Rebellion stirred up a bitterness at the North which the Treaty of Washington has even now only partially allayed; after reading the "*Fears for Democracy*," all must admit that this was wrong. The case is stated shortly and powerfully in these words: "Our astonishment knew no bounds when, in the civil war, the feelings of almost all the world were found to be with the slave-holders; but the great pulse of mankind beats generously, and against the wronger." Surely here is another honorable deed to be included in Mr. Ingersoll's new history. Then, too, there are the wrongs of the American people which were mentioned just now, — one history will never be enough! Or why could not we have the American wrongs as the body of the volume, with a commentary on English history in a neat appendix? Thus a new gospel or a kind of American Koran might be made of a handy size, and Mr. Ingersoll, like a modern Mahomet, might take the field with his sword in his hand and his book under his arm, slay our oppressors, and teach us history on new principles. Were Mr. Ingersoll to do this, the Republic might yet be saved, otherwise hope is wellnigh dead; for Mr. Ingersoll has already shown us that the oppression the South suffered before the war drove it to rebellion; he has also shown us that such oppression was by no means confined to the South, but that, on the contrary, the whole people were a despised crowd whose cry no one heeded, and he has more than hinted that this dreadful state of things continues. Unless, therefore, some deliverer arise, this is what we are to expect: "If we remain a free people, the same spirit that prompted the South to what they called secession will prompt the North, or the West, or the Middle, or any region where insult aggrieves or oppression tramples, to seek redress, and another conflict like that of 1860 will ensue." Before such a destiny not only the "victory-crowned heroes" of the Revolution, but we ourselves need not be ashamed to tremble.